

### Appendix 3: DAU Course Descriptions

ACQ 450, Leading in the Acquisition Environment  
ACQ 451, Integrated Acquisition for Decision Makers  
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PMT 401, The Program Manager's Course





## **ACQ 450, Leading in the Acquisition Environment**

This action-based learning course provides an overview of the competencies and skills needed to lead in an acquisition environment. Experiential activities include role playing, simulation, communication, and critical-thinking exercises; a leadership challenge; and completion of a 360° feedback instrument and executive coaching to develop action plans related to the feedback. Participants will learn to apply strategies for leading up, down, and across in an acquisition organization.

Objectives: Those who successfully complete this course will:

- Design a personal plan to improve leadership effectiveness in the acquisition environment;
- Formulate a leadership solution for a work-related leadership issue after team discussion of viable alternatives; and
- Develop a strategy to lead an organization to effectively perform in an environment of rapid and constant change.

Target Attendees: This class is for civilians and military in supervisory positions in all career fields. Industry and allied participants are eligible to attend and are encouraged to register on a space-available basis.

Prerequisite(s): Level III certification in at least one acquisition career field and at least 3 years of Level III experience. Industry and allied participants should have at least three 3 years of Level III-equivalent acquisition experience.

Course Length: 4 class days preceded by approximately 4 hours of precourse work

## **ACQ 451, Integrated Acquisition for Decision Makers**

This participant-driven, action-based learning course exposes Defense Acquisition Workforce members to the multidisciplinary acquisition perspectives, integration challenges, and influencing strategies necessary for successful integrated acquisition decision making. Through facilitated discussions, simulations, exercises, and case studies, participants will formulate strategies that promote effective integration and collaboration both within and outside of their programs. Participants will gain a wider view of the acquisition environment and their respective roles and responsibilities.

Objectives: Those who successfully complete this course will:

- Recognize the challenges and opportunities for integrated acquisition, including their own programs; and
- Formulate strategies to promote effective integration and collaboration both within and outside of their programs.

**Target Attendees:** This class is for civilians and military professionals in all acquisition career fields. Industry and allied participants are eligible to attend and are encouraged to attend on a space-available basis.

**Prerequisite(s):** Level III certification in at least one acquisition career field and at least 3 years of Level III experience. Industry and allied participants should have at least 3 years of Level III-equivalent acquisition experience.

**Course Length:** 3 class days preceded by a few hours of precourse work

## **ACQ 452, Forging Stakeholder Relationships**

This action-based learning course introduces professionals to the methods and skills necessary to identify, assess, and promote the building of stakeholder relationships required for success in the acquisition environment. Experiential activities will include a precourse stakeholder assessment as well as simulation, communication, and critical-thinking activities that will facilitate the development of tailored stakeholder action plans. At the end of the course, professionals will be able to build ownership of acquisition outcomes across the enterprise.

**Objectives:** Those who successfully complete this course will be able to:

- Apply a stakeholder model to their current or future assignments;
- Assess stakeholder expectations and communicate effectively relative to constraints and opportunities; and
- Develop an action plan to promote effective stakeholder relationships in an acquisition environment.

**Target Attendees:** This class is for civilians and military in supervisory positions in all acquisition career fields. Industry and allied participants are eligible to participate and are encouraged to attend on a space available basis.

**Prerequisite(s):** Level III certification in at least one acquisition career field and at least 3 years of Level III experience. Industry and allied participants should have at least 3 years of Level III-equivalent acquisition experience.

**Course Length:** 3 class days preceded by a few hours of pre- and post-course work.

## **Crucial Conversations**

Crucial Conversations is a results-oriented communications effectiveness seminar. It is specifically designed to equip participants with the skills to handle conversations when opinions are diverging, the stakes are high, and emotions are running strong. The seminar takes place in a classroom setting over a two day period and includes video presentations, extensive student participation, and facilitated discussion. Fellows identify

and practice a short list of practical conversation skills that will serve them well in their professional lives as well as their personal ones.

## **Ethics**

The Ethics module focuses the Fellows on a variety of ethical concerns which face acquisition executives today. The Fellows are base-lined in ethics through regulatory guidance and defense department directives; they also engage in readings on current ethical concerns through articles and case studies. Through various media formats, ethical issues are brought into the classroom where Fellows can reflect, analyze, and discuss their viewpoints through critical thinking.

## **Kirton Adaption-Innovation Inventory Workshop**

The Kirton Adaption-Innovation Theory and its associated psychometric instrument provide insight into how people solve problems and interact while making decisions. With this insight, Fellows learn to improve the dynamics and cohesion of teams by understanding that individuals within a team approach problems differently and that this very difference can be used to strengthen the team. This understanding should lead to the differences not only being tolerated, but welcomed. In addition, the Fellows learn how to reduce stress within the team by reducing individuals' stress.

## **National Security Policy Studies**

The National Security module promotes the development of Fellows as strategic thinkers and national security policy makers through a comprehensive analysis of the myriad of variables that impact and effect national security policy. A crucial objective of this course is to enable the Fellows to effectively operate at the strategic level of crafting policies and deciding why one policy is more likely to safeguard the nation's security than another policy.

As future policy advisors or policy makers, the Fellows develop the skills to be able to select and integrate a wide range of policy decisions across diverse content areas such as domestic and international politics, military strategy, economics, the information domain, and technological capabilities. Fellows learn how various content areas affect the multiple dimensions and dynamics of strategic national security affairs. As Fellows progress through this module, they will be exposed to a wide range of elements, instruments, and processes that may be used to effectively implement policies and shape the operational environment. Fellows also quickly realize that there are insufficient resources to fully maximize all of these capabilities—much as policy makers often have come to realize in the past. Fellows learn that there is no “school solution” at the strategic level, but that learning how to think at the strategic level is a critical skill for crafting a secure future.

## **The Program Manager's Course**

The Program Manager's Course (PMT 401) is DAU's rigorous, executive-level, in-residence, case-based course which lasts 10 weeks. It is designed for highly motivated, experienced acquisition practitioners, specially selected for their potential as leaders of major acquisition programs, integrated product teams, and major command division chiefs. PMT 401 is a demanding course that relies on a Three-Step Learning Process:

1. Individual study and preparation per case (1–2 hours)
2. Active participation in small (6–8 person) group discussion (20 minutes per case)
3. Active participation in large (24–32 person) group discussion (80 minutes per case)

The Program Manager's Course is constructed around eight overarching themes involving primarily case studies of real life acquisition-related challenges and dilemmas that provide each learner the opportunity to practice:

1. Leading a program in a rapidly changing environment
2. Leading program management operations in different acquisition phases
3. Working effectively with higher headquarters
4. Working effectively with industry

5. Achieving and maintaining excellent customer relations
6. Applying appropriate tools for the evolving information environment
7. Working effectively with external organizations
8. Leading joint and international programs.

DAU uses Looking Glass, a large scale management simulation, as a capstone exercise for PMT 401. As its name suggests, Looking Glass literally offers managers a



mirror with which they can see a reflection of their behavior and its impact on others. Looking Glass reinforces the simple lesson that to manage or lead others, future program managers must first look within to manage and lead themselves. DAU licenses Looking Glass from the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL) in

Greensboro, North Carolina. As indicated by its title, CCL is no stranger to creative training. Initially developed under a grant from the Office on Naval Research, Looking Glass has now become the most popular behavioral simulation in the world.

Looking Glass helps participants move beyond the cognitive and analytical skills applied on the case studies to hands-on application in a simulated real-world environment. Although Looking Glass is not a defense-related simulation, it mirrors the same challenges faced by acquisition PM:

- Developing an acquisition strategy for the future
- Transitioning research and development products to the customer
- Handling production capacity limits and increased demand
- Resolving difficulties with international collaboration and competition
- Dealing with raw material shortages
- Coping with environmental and legal issues
- Adjusting to corporate and public policies
- Deciding what to do with a nonproductive plant or a problem employee
- Working effectively in division and corporate cross-functional teams

PMT 401 also hosts a Capitol Hill Workshop to provide the Fellows an overview and understanding of the U.S. Congress and the legislative process. This workshop is designed to offer attendees an overview of current U.S. public policy issues by providing an in-depth analysis of Congressional politics, decision-making, and their implications to the Department of Defense and the nation. This provides Fellows the opportunity to discuss current issues of interest – on and off the record – with political experts and leading authorities



who have experience in all aspects of the national policymaking process and the potential consequences to U.S. national interests in the coming years.

By statute, Program Executive Officers (PEOs), PEO deputies, Acquisition Category (ACAT) I & II Program Managers (PMs), and ACAT I & II Deputy PMs (DPMs) are required to complete an advanced program management curriculum beyond Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) Level III certification. OSD (C3I) has directed that ACAT IA PMs and DPMs complete the same advanced training curriculum. PMT 401, together with DAU's Executive Program Manager's Course (PMT 402), fulfills that advanced training requirement.